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ABSTRACT

This two-part report describes the developmental studies program at Los Angeles Pierce College (LAPC) and provides a summary of 1980-81 use figures and evaluations for LAPC's Study Skills Center. After noting the increasing need for developmental studies, the report indicates the methods used to assess students' reading, writing, and mathematics abilities and describes the individualized peer tutoring program. It then briefly reviews developmental courses in reading, writing, and study skills and directs attention to the learning laboratory and tutor training classes. After listing a variety of workshops available to developmental students, the report capsulizes student evaluation methods, and refers to the developmental program's textbook readability service for instructors and mentions coordination efforts between the Study Skills Center and other campus services. The second part of the report provides a 1980-81 annual report for the Study Skills Center. First, general use data are presented for the tutorial services by subject area, and the results of evaluation are offered for a language skills program for hearing impaired students. In addition, the results of a readability study of 156 textbooks are reviewed, and information on reading and math diagnosis and assessment is provided, including the number of students tested and recommendations made. Finally, use figures are cited for the Center's program for foreign-language speaking students. (KL)

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A DESCRIPTION OF A DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM FOR HIGH RISK STUDENTS IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

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October, 1981

A Description of a Developmental Program

for High Risk Students in a Community College

by: Sandra Schulman, Assoc. Prof.,
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Current data and literature indicate that today an unprecedented number of students with serious deficiencies in reading, writing and computational skills are enrolling in two and four year colleges. These students tend to enroll in classes for which they are ill-prepared and they often discover these deficiencies too late to take advantage of remedial programs. Increasing numbers of institutions of higher learning have developed programs to meet the needs of these students.

At Pierce College our under-prepared students have a number of options for being diagnosed and properly placed in appropriate developmental programs. A brief description of our program follows:

IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT. We offer all entering students the opportunity of taking an English placement test which includes a reading comprehension segment. In addition, students are encouraged to take a reading comprehension or mathematics diagnostic test at our Study Skills/Tutorial Center on a walk-in basis. Instructors may request that center staff come to their classes during the first week of school and administer the reading or mathematics test to the class. After testing, students are referred to appropriate classes, to laboratories, to workshops or to individual tutoring as indicated by their scores. Foreign students who may have an English language problem are given a Comprehensive English Language Test and referred into appropriate ESL (English as a Second Language) classes or more intensive programs such as conversation or writing workshops and/or individual tutoring.

The reading test used in our assessment program is the comprehension section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, Form F_1. The mathematics test is one devised by a member of our staff and is criterion referenced. The foreign speaking students are given the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT). We also have diagnostic tests available in algebra, spelling, vocabulary and English mechanics which enable us to prescribe appropriate programmed, media laboratory materials or individualized peer tutoring.

Post-testing is utilized to determine the progress made by the student in reading, mathematics, spelling, and English as a Second Language.

TUTORIAL PROGRAM. Approximately 1300 students per year are served on a regular basis through our individualized peer tutorial program. Students who have a deficiency in a basic academic skill such as reading, writing, computation, study skills, etc. are referred to the center either by a subject instructor or a counselor. The student may seek help without a referral, but a follow-up notice is sent to the instructor to facilitate tracking and to maintain coordination between the center and the instructional staff.

The student tutee fills out a "contract" which includes his/her schedule, an agreement to attend a minimum of two sessions per week as long as is necessary, a place to log each meeting, and a place for prescription, evaluation and follow-up information.

The tutee meets with the supervisor or a trained instructional assistant who does any needed assessment and "prescribes" the prodedures, labs, and materials to be used in the student's individualized sessions.

Student tutors are hired on an hourly basis. They must be full-time students, be recommended by an instructor in their subject field, and be interviewed by the tutorial director. They also submit a contract which includes a schedule of their available hours, a section for assignment of meetings with their tutees and a section for logging hours of service.

Tutor training consists of regularly scheduled sessions with the director and/or instructional assistant. Handbooks, training films, data sheets and discussion are utilized in the training sessions in addition to ongoing monitoring and on-the-job training.

DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES. Students whose deficiencies are more generalized than those handled in the tutorial program, may enroll in a number of courses especially designed to build up college level academic skills as well as develop study habits to improve course performance:

Reading Improvement is a class designed for the students with major difficulty in reading basic college textbook material. The course stresses individual assistance in developing techniques for improving comprehension, vocabulary and word attack skills.

Fundamentals of Writing is a laboratory class for the students who need individualized help in writing sentences, paragraphs, short essays, and reports with emphasis on punctuation, spelling and grammar.

College Study Skills is a course for students who need to develop techniques of studying, memorizing, taking tests, outlining and notetaking in order to function in college level courses.

Students in the tutorial program have the option of enrolling in a Learning Laboratory course and receiving non-transferable credit for work in the program. Tutors also have the option of enrolling in a one unit Tutor Training class. Three levels of classes are offered in English for Foreign Speaking Students as well as two levels of remedial English classes into which students may be referred according to the scores achieved on the English placement tests.

WORKSHOPS AND LABORATORIES. Numerous workshops and laboratories are available for developmental students. The mathematics department offers a mathematics review class as well as a math laboratory for walk-in help. The English department has a writing laboratory to which students are referred when extra composition help is needed. The computer science and business administration departments also offer laboratory help and tutoring.

Non-credit workshops are available to students in the Study Skills Center. These have been specifically developed as an additional opportunity for remedial help. Workshops are taught by instructors or qualified instructional assistants and may have enrollments of from 10 to 25 students. They are usually open-entry and exit, are supplemental to classes or tutorial programs, and are developed as the need arises.

The workshops currently offered are: English conversation for foreign speaking students, English writing for foreign speaking students, basic grammar review, basic reading and word attack (in center); and accounting, business education and language skills for the hearing impaired (in departments).

EVALUATION & TRACKING. At the time a student enters the developmental program, he or she is encouraged to specify his or her needs or goals, which are noted on the student contract. At the conclusion of the services, evaluations are done which include evidence of achievement of goals such as post-test scores, course grades, attendance, improvement in confidence, study habits, attitudes, etc..

In addition to this, three evaluation forms are distributed for each student in the tutorial program: one to the tutee, one to the tutor and one to the referring instructor. Items on this form include judgments about improvement in skills and habits as a result of tutorial services, whether the student might have dropped or failed without tutorial help, suggestions for improvement of our services, etc.. Post-test data, evaluation tallies and general conclusions are included in a year-end report on the whole developmental program.

OTHER SERVICES & COORDINATION. An additional service of the developmental program is a textbook readability survey which is conducted by Study Skills Center staff. Any instructor may submit a text to be analyzed for readability level.

There is ongoing coordination with the counseling department, the coordinator of the program for the handicapped, coordinator of new student orientation, the women's resource center, the career center, and the financial aids coordinator.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS: Current data has indicated that the developmental program at Pierce College has contributed to student retention, to improvement in grades and measurable improvement in basic language, reading and mathematics skills. In addition, improvement in study skills habits and motivation has been noted in the students who have participated in our programs. Our services have expanded each year to include more workshops, and more comprehensive testing and assessment programs. The numbers of students served have increased considerably each year since the inception of the developmental program.

The annual report for the 1980-81 year follows.

1980-81 YEAR-END REPORT ON TUTORIAL SERVICES
OF THE LA PIERCE COLLEGE STUDY SKILLS CENTER

I. Purpose

The purpose of our program is to use peer tutors to give supportive instruction in basic skills and subject areas, to build effective study habits, and to raise the level of self-confidence of the student tutee. The tutor does not replace the instructor but merely supplements the classroom instruction. Tutoring is offered in the Study Skills Center as well as in the following departments: Office Administration, Computer Science, and Mathematics.

II. General Data

A. Number of students served on a regular basis 1281
B. Number of student tutors 153
C. Average number of hours of tutoring per student 12.25
D. Total number of tutoring hours 15,289
E. Number of VEA students served on a regular basis 534
F. Number of EOPS students served on a regular basis 114

III. Data on Subject Area Tutoring

A. Breakdown by subject area

Subject	Number of Students	Number of Tutoring Hrs.
1. English as a Second Language	203	5001 *
2. Reading/Study Skills	126	2164
3. Mathematics/Algebra	199	1596 **
4. English grammar/basic writing	130	1575 **
5. Accounting	91	1111
6. Foreign Languages	89	717
7. Chemistry/Physics	90	684
8. Computer Science	52	460 **
9. Other subjects (less than 100 hours per subject)	301	1981

* Includes hours in workshops
** Walk-in help in labs not included in these figures

B. Conclusions
The most requested tutorial subject area was English as a Second Language. The basic academic skills such as English, reading, writing, and mathematics were the areas of the greatest utilization of tutorial services.

IV. Results of Evaluation Surveys

A. Instructor responses
Total number returned by deadline (6/18) = 353
1. Duri course of services, student improved in:
Subject area . . . 187 Study habits . . 96
Self-confidence. . 160 Attendance . . . 46

2. Tutoring contributed to improvement:
   Yes . . . . . 190 In part 25
   No . . . . . 8 Not able to judge . . 38
3. Student's probable final grade in class:
   A 13
   B 55
   C 93
   D 31
   F 20
   INC 1
   W 12
   CR 7
   NC 0
4. Student would have failed or dropped class without tutorial help:
   Yes . . . . . 98 No . . . . 60 Not sure 83

B. Peer tutor responses
Total number returned = 361
1. Student attendance and promptness generally satisfactory:
   Yes . . . . . 318 No 40
2. Student supplemented help with outside study or assignments:
   Yes . . . . . 26 No 80
3. Student might have dropped or failed the class without tutorial help:
   Yes . . . . . 149 No 141
4. Student's grade was improved as a result of tutoring:
   Yes . . . . . 259 No 37

C. Student tutee responses
Total number returned = 263
1. Grade was raised as a result of tutoring:
   Yes . . . . . 238 No 20
2. Tutor was generally patient and helpful:
   Yes . . . . . 241 No 1
3. As a result of the tutoring student improved in:
   Subject area . . . .247 Study Skills 124
   Self-confidence . . 142 Other 32
4. Student would have failed or dropped course without tutoring help:
   Yes . . . . . 110 No 111
5. Tutor was present and prompt most of the time:
   Yes . . . . . 243 No 3

D. General conclusions of tutorial data:
The figures indicate that tutoring was helpful for improving grades and preventing attrition.

REPORT ON STUDY SKILLS CENTER INVOLVEMENT IN
MODULAR LANGUAGE PROGRAM FOR HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS

I. Purpose: To offer needed language skills reinforcement to hearing impaired students.

II. Data on Workshops and Tutoring:

A. Number of students enrolled in workshops = 67

B. Number of students tutored individually = 55

C. Number of hours of tutoring = 1167

III. Evaluation based on final survey:

A. 80% of the students attended regularly.

B. 89% felt they improved in English.

C. 67% felt they improved in self-confidence.

D. 61% felt they improved in study habits.

E. 69% felt the program helped them obtain a C or better in classes.

F. 23% felt they would have failed without the help.

G. 16% felt they would have dropped without the help.

IV. Conclusion:

The Program supplied much needed language reinforcement support for the hearing impaired students.

V. Textbook Readability Survey

A. Purpose:

To analyze readability level of texts, upon instructor's request

B. Total Number Surveyed to Date = 156

C. Breakdown of Readability Levels:

Books	at	8th	Grade Level	= 2
"	"	9th	"	= 6
"	"	10th	"	= 11
"	"	11th	"	= 15
"	"	12th	"	= 20
"	"	13th	"	= 13
"	"	14th	"	= 25
"	"	15th	"	= 26
"	"	16th	"	= 12
"	"	17th	"	= 12
"	"	18th	"	= 9

1. The average grade level for Pierce College textbooks surveyed is 13.5.

2. 33% of the texts were written on the 14th & 15th grade levels.

3. 63% of the texts were written above the 13th grade level.

4. Two-thirds of entering Pierce College students who are tested read below the 12th grade level.

5. It can be concluded that the majority of entering Pierce College students can be predicted to have difficulty comprehending the subject textbooks.

D. Conclusion:

A number of instructors have recognized that present texts used in their classes are written at an unrealistic readability level for their students and have requested recommendations of our center concerning readability, clarity, organization, etc. of new texts being considered for their classes.

YEAR-END REPORT ON STUDY SKILLS CENTER PROGRAM
IN DIAGNOSIS AND ASSESSMENT

I. Reading Testing Program — Total Students Tested = 2596

A. Students Tested in Reading Comprehension During English Placement Test (using Gates MacGinitie Reading Test, Form F_1 Comprehension Section)

Total students tested 1370
recommended to Dev. Com. 22 . . . 211 (16%) (individual tutoring lab)
recommended to Dev. Com. 20 . . . 621 (45%) (remedial reading class)
recommended to Psych. 26 . . . . .538 (39%) (power & speed reading class)

Of the students tested, 832 (61%) were found to have reading deficiencies and were referred to remedial reading classes or for individual tutoring.

Conclusion: Testing the reading comprehension abilities of students enables the students to receive guidance into appropriate classes.

B. Students Tested in Reading Comprehension in Subject Classes

Number of classes tested = 41
Total students tested 853
recommended to Dev. Com. 22 . . . 107 (12%)
recommended to Dev. Com. 20 . . . 491 (58%)
recommended to Psych. 26 . . . . .255 (30%)
Percent of students with reading deficiencies = 70%

Classes tested involved content areas of Sociology, Industrial Arts, Secretarial Science, English, Psychology, ESL, and Special Education.

Conclusion: Of the students tested, 70% were found to have deficiencies in reading skills and were recommended to remedial reading classes or for individual tutoring.

C. Students Tested in Reading Comprehension in the Study Skills Center

Total students tested 373
recommended to Dev. Com. 22 . . . 136 (36%)
recommended to Dev. Com. 20 . . . 139 (37%)
recommended to Psych. 26 . . . . . 98 (26%)

Of the students with reading deficiencies, 275 (74%) enrolled in remedial reading classes or individual tutoring.

Of the students so referred, 67% improved as a result of tutoring or workshops as revealed by post-test scores.

Of the students who did not show improvement, 75% were ESL students (foreign-speaking).

II. Foreign Language Speaking Students Tested With the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT)

From September, 1980 to June, 1981, 511 students were given the CELT test for speakers of English as a second language in the Study Skills Center. An additional 173 were tested in ESL classes. 104 students received a post-test at the end of the semester.

Adult School (Below College Preparatory level) 14 (3%)
English 43. . . . . 178 (35%)
English 44. . . . . 161 (32%) } 3 levels of English as Second
English 45. . . . . 123 (24%) Language instruction
To Regular English course placement 35 (7%)

Post-testing showed an average gain of 52%.

Conclusion: 94% of the foreign students tested needed an ESL class or a workshop for English improvement; 7% qualified for regular English placement. Significant improvement was found in those who enrolled in workshops or the tutorial program in the following areas: self confidence, use of conversational English, vocabulary for vocational classes.

III. Math Testing Program

(Test developed by Lee Goldwasser, staff member).

A. In-Class Math Diagnostic Tests

Total students tested 367
recommended for Basic Math Improvement . . . 203 (55%)
recommended for Regular Math Classes 164 (45%)

Total vocational classes tested = 5

Conclusion: More than half of the students tested were found to be deficient in college level math skills. Screening the students prior to enrollment in classes which they are likely to drop or fail would prevent unnecessary delay in guiding the students to appropriate classes.

The chairperson of the Industrial Education Department has noted that the performance in the Math 48 (Technical Math) classes has improved greatly as a result of the testing, assessment, and diagnosis program. The instructors have been able to upgrade the course content, due to the fact that students deficient in basic skills were referred to proper classes or for tutorial help.

B. Math Diagnostic Test (Walk-Ins)

Total students tested 55
recommended for Basic Math Tutoring 29 (53%)
those with sufficient skills to enroll in Math classes . . 26 (47%)

Conclusion: More than half of the students entering classes which require basic mathematical skills may not possess the necessary background to succeed in those classes.

YEAR-END REPORT ON STUDY SKILLS CENTER PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPEAKING STUDENTS

I. ESL (English as a Second Language) Student Enrollment

A. In ESL Workshops
1. Fall 1980-81 80
2. Spring 1981 168
3. Total 1980-1981 academic year 248

ESL Vocational students in ESL workshops
Fall 1980-81 31
Spring 1981 49
Total 1980-81 academic year . . . 80

B. In subject area tutorial program
1. Fall 1980-81 80
2. Spring 1981 82
3. Total 1980-81 academic year 162

C. Total ESL students served in ESL workshops and subject area tutoring
1. Fall 1980-81 160
2. Spring 1981 250
3.. Total 1980-81 academic year 410

II. Workshop Attendance Rate

A. Fall 1980-81 . . . 79%
B. Spring 1981 . . . .79%

III. CELT Testing Program

A. Total Testing Program
1. Students tested in ESL Classes 173
2. Other students tested ("walk-ins," workshops, tutees) . . . 338
3. Total tests administered 511

Recommendations
to regular English Placement 7%
to English 43 . . . . . 35%
to English 44 . . . . . 32%
to English 45 . . . . . 24%
to Adult School classes (below college preparatory level). .3%

3 levels of ESL = classes

4. Students who showed noticeable improvement as a result of tutoring and/or workshops 57%

B. Workshop CELT Testing Program

All ESL workshop students were given the CELT test

1. Average pre-test scores
   - Fall 1980-81 29
   - Spring 1981 34
2. Average post-test scores
   - Fall 1980-81 41
   - Spring 1981 48

IV. Students' Evaluations of ESL Workshops

A. Of the students attending the ESL workshops, 98% (Fall) and 91% (Spring) felt that their English improved.

B. In both the Fall and Spring workshops, the vast majority of the students said that they had at least partially achieved the goals they had set at the beginning of the semester.

C. Of the Fall and Spring students, 97.5% rated their instructor as either very good or good.

D. 100% of the entire year's students said that they liked the workshop.

V. Policy Established As A Result of Program

Partially as a result of our program, the Office of Instruction has inserted in the Pierce Catalog 1981-82 the following paragraph which clearly states that English is the language of instruction:

> Admission to the California Community College is contingent on the ability to profit from the instruction offered. The basic language of instruction is English (Education Code Section 30). To satisfy these conditions, all students whose native language is not English will take the placement test for Non-Native Speakers of English at the Study Skills Center.

VI. Conclusions

A. Of the foreign students CELT tested, 94% needed an ESL workshop or class for English improvement.

B. Only 7% of the foreign students CELT tested qualified for regular English placement.

C. Significant improvement was found in those students who enrolled in the ESL workshops and/or the tutorial program.

Particular improvement was noted in the following areas:

1. Self-Confidence
2. Use of Conversational English
3. Use of Written English
4. Understanding and Use of English Idioms
5. Development of English Vocabulary
6. English Reading Skills
7. English Spelling Skills
8. Performance in Mainstream College Courses

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS: All our current data indicates that our program has contributed to student retention, improvement in grades and measurable improvement in basic language, reading, and mathematical skills. In addition, we have noted improvement in study skills and habits and motivation in the students who have utilized our services. Our services, as well as numbers of students served, are expanding each year.

*Further information on data and/or testing materials may be obtained by contacting Sandra Schulman.

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